

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 4-7, 9, 11-14 and 16-18 are now present in this application. Claims 4-6 and 11-13 are independent. Claims 1-3, 8, 10 and 15 have been canceled.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 4-7, 9, 11-14 and 16-18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, to expedite prosecution only, allowable claims 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13 have been rewritten in independent form. Thus, independent claims 4-6 and 11-13 and their dependent claims 7, 9, 14 and 16-18 are allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of such claim amendments, the present application is now in condition for allowance.

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Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 3, 8 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yuen (U.S. Patent No. 5,949,914). Claims 2 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yuen in view of Pattie (U.S. Patent No. 5,696,848). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Without acquiring to any of the Examiner's allegations made in rejecting these claims, these claims are cancelled to place the application in condition for allowance. Thus, the rejections are moot and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons and in view of the above clarifying amendments, Applicants respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw all of the objections and rejections of record, and earnestly solicits an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Amendment After Final Rejection, in that it raises no new issues but merely places the claims in a form more clearly patentable over the references of record. In the alternative, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this Amendment After Final Rejection in that it reduces the issues for appeal.

Should there be any outstanding matters which need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact

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Art Unit 2623

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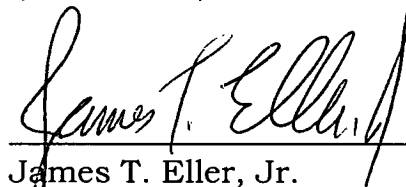
Esther H. Chong (Registration No. 40,953) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.


Respectfully submitted,

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By:



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